

## **SWAZILAND**



**Swaziland** U.S. foreign assistance to Swaziland focuses on promotion of democratic values, including human rights in security forces, and the key health threats of HIV/AIDS and associated diseases, such as tuberculosis, which have reduced average life expectancy to 31.3 years, the lowest in the world. The pandemic has already orphaned 130,000 children, the national population is declining, and the negative economic impact in this nearly absolute monarchy, where the majority of citizens are subsistence farmers, will only become more staggering.

**FOREIGN RELATIONS:** Swaziland is a member of the United Nations, the African Union, and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). Swaziland was the chair of the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Organ for Defense, Politics, and Security from September 2008 until the beginning of September 2009 and remains a member of the Organ Troika. Ten accredited ambassadors or honorary consuls are resident in the country. Swaziland maintains diplomatic missions in Brussels, Copenhagen, Kuala Lumpur, London, Maputo, Nairobi, Pretoria, Taipei, the United Nations, and Washington.

**U.S.-SWAZILAND RELATIONS:** The United States seeks to maintain and strengthen the good bilateral relations that have existed since the kingdom became independent in 1968. U.S. policy stresses continued economic and political reform and improved industrial relations.

The United States assists Swaziland with a number of HIV/AIDS initiatives and programs implemented through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Peace Corps, African Development Foundation, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Defense. In June 2009, the U.S. and Swaziland finalized a Partnership Framework Agreement under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), increasing U.S. HIV/AIDS assistance to Swaziland to approximately \$28 million per year. In addition, the U.S. supports small enterprise development, education, military training, institutional and human resources development, agricultural development, and trade capacity building. The U.S. is also the largest bilateral donor to the Global Fund, Swaziland's principal HIV/AIDS funding source. The U.S. Government sends about four Swazi professionals to the United States each year, from both the public and private sectors, primarily for master's degrees, and about five others for three- to four-week International Visitor programs. About six military members are sent to the United States for education and training purposes.

In 2003, Peace Corps volunteers returned to Swaziland after a nine-year absence. In June 2008, the U.S. and Swaziland finalized a memorandum of understanding (MOU) expanding the duties of the Peace Corps mission in Swaziland. The Peace Corps/Swaziland program, known as the Community Health Project, focuses on HIV/AIDS and provides assistance in the execution of two components of the HIV/AIDS national strategy--risk reduction and mitigation of the impact of the disease. Volunteers encourage youth to engage in appropriate behaviors that will reduce the spread of HIV; they work with children orphaned by the HIV/AIDS pandemic; and they assist in capacity building for non-governmental organizations and community based organizations.

**Peace and Security:** FY 2010 resources, through the Department of State, will support military assistance programs that promote a higher degree of professionalism in the Swaziland defense forces through education on civilian-military relations.

**Investing in People:** Linkages with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR): Swaziland will receive support to scale up integrated prevention, care and treatment programs throughout the country and support orphans and vulnerable children.